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ABSTRACT

Accreditation relationships of postsecondary institutions in the United States are described in this study conducted by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA). All regionally accredited institutions in four of the established regions (Middle States, New England, Western, Northern) and a sample of states from two of the regions (North Central, Southern) were included in the data. Accrediting relationships of institutions that are not regionally accredited, accrediting relationships of regionally accredited institutions, and the results of a longitudinal study of a set of institutions in one region are examined. Also investigated are: the influence of institutional sponsorship, size, and highest degree offered; analysis of the most active specialized accrediting agencies; and cohort analysis for a group of large universities. It is suggested that this type of analysis may improve the effectiveness of accrediting agencies and increase the extent to which their procedures, timetables, and expectations of institutions can be more complementary or synonymous and less costly to institutions. Extensive tabulation of the data is provided and recommendations for further study and agency cooperation are presented. A list of accrediting fields for which agencies are recognized by COPA is appended with coding notations. (SF)

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COPA TECHNICAL REPORT NO. 1

Multiple Accreditation Relationships of Postsecondary Institutions in the United States

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Richard M. Parrish

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Multiple Accreditation Relationships of Postsecondary
Institutions in the United States

H.R. Kells

and

Richard M. Parrish

Technical Report #1

The Council on Postsecondary Accreditation

June 1979

The Authors --

H.R. Kells is Professor of Higher Education and Information Studies at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J.

Richard M. Parrish is Director of Institutional Research at Ocean County College, Toms River, N.J., and is a doctoral candidate at Rutgers University.

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FOREWORD

Publication of this work marks the beginning of what COPA hopes will be a continuing and significant series of reports about research in accreditation -- of which there has been far too little over the years. Unfortunately, rhetoric rather than research has predominated in the public literature regarding the still widely misunderstood process of accreditation.

Work such as this by Dr. Kells and Mr. Parrish will be helpful in dispelling myths that have grown up around the accrediting process. Despite the authors' caution about the reliability of the numbers they found (due to the methodology that had to be employed), we consider their research a true "state of the art" effort regarding the kinds of relationships that exist between accrediting agencies and the postsecondary institutions of this country. We now know, more reliably than we have ever known before, the amount and type of accreditation that is taking place by size, type, and degree level of institutions. Kells and Parrish also have documented which accrediting agencies account for the bulk of the activity.

The authors' recommendations, we think, are good and COPA hopes to follow through on them in its continuing effort to strengthen, improve, and coordinate the accrediting process in this country.

Kenneth E. Young
President
Council on Postsecondary
Accreditation

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A summary presentation of part of the data from this study was made at the COPA Winter Conference in Charleston, South Carolina, on January 31, 1979.

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Multiple Accreditation Relationships of Postsecondary Institutions in the United States

H. R. Kells and Richard M. Parrish

Despite the fact that leaders of many postsecondary institutions and of organizations which represent the interests of such institutions have complained about the burdens and purported wastefulness of multiple accreditation relationships (1,2), the literature does not contain systematically gathered and analyzed information about the nature and extent of such relationships. Even the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA), the coordinating agency for all postsecondary accreditation agencies, does not have a useful compilation concerning the extent to which these agencies are found to have multiple relationships with the institutions which support the agencies, use their processes, and are listed as accredited by them.

Frequently, interest has been expressed in improving the effectiveness of accrediting agencies and increasing the extent to which their procedures, timetables, and expectations of institutions can be made complementary or synonymous and therefore less burdensome and costly to institutions (3). But a recent study has shown that in one region of the country, although the regional accreditation agency was found to have cooperated in evaluation team visits with state agency representatives about 80 percent

of the time from 1970 to 1976, this same agency took part in joint team visits with other accreditation agencies only 20 percent of the time (4). Even though opportunities for joint or concurrent visits do not exist in every instance, these data would seem to indicate a large potential for increased collaborative efforts. In order to form the basis for systematic development of common and less duplicative procedures, much more information is needed about the nature of the institution/agency and agency/agency relationships.

It was the purpose of this study to describe fully the extent and nature of multiple accreditation relationships of postsecondary institutions in the United States. Any special or significant characteristics related to institutional size, degree level, or sponsorship and any apparent trends in these relationships since 1970 were sought. Finally, the relationships between agencies as described by common institutional affiliations were explored.

PROCEDURES

The source of the information analyzed in this study was the official list of accredited postsecondary institutions prepared for the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation by the American Council on Education (ACE) (5). Almost all of the listings in the 1978-79 edition of the book were coded and converted to a machine processing format.

Specifically, the listing for each regionally accredited institution was coded by date (the year of the listing),

geography (state), region (accreditation regions), size (four categories), highest degree offered (four categories), sponsorship (public, private non-profit, profit-seeking) and accrediting agency relationships (both the number of accrediting agency relationships and identity of each agency or group of agencies concerned). The 53 accreditation agencies recognized by COPA were not individually coded; rather, the general field or discipline area for the specialized accrediting agencies was chosen as the unit for analysis. Therefore the several fields in which more than one agency operates such as allied health, law, and nursing were listed each as one field, not as several agencies. The regional accrediting agencies were coded by region and the four national institutional agencies were coded by agency. Forty-seven fields or agencies were therefore coded instead of the 53 possible, or the much larger number which would result if every sub-field agency in the allied health area (there are more than 20) had been separately listed. See the Appendix for the list of fields as they were coded.

In order to obtain a fairly accurate description of the accreditation relationships of postsecondary institutions for the entire country, all of the regionally accredited institutions in four of the regions (Middle States, New England, Western, and Northwestern) and in a sample of states from two of the regions (North Central, 6 of 17 states -- Colorado, Iowa, Missouri, New Mexico, Ohio, and South Dakota; and Southern, 4 of 11 states -- Georgia,

Louisiana, North Carolina, and Virginia) were coded for the study. The states chosen for the sample of the two largest regions were not chosen randomly. They were carefully chosen to represent states with dense and less dense populations of postsecondary institutions and states with different systems of vocational and two-year institutions. They are also representative of the region geographically.

The data for 1,663 institutions so chosen were then analyzed using standard descriptive statistical routines and data organization techniques through the services of the Rutgers Center for Computer and Information Services via the New Jersey Educational Computer Network.

The 821 institutions that are not regionally accredited in the states in question were not fully coded because a preliminary analysis indicated that very few multiple accreditation relationships exist for these institutions. Instead, a general but useful survey of the extent of these relationships was made by hand counting and simple cross-listing procedures.

Finally, a longitudinal analysis was made for one of the regions of the country, the Middle States (MSA) region. The same coding procedure was employed for all of the MSA institutions listed in 1970-71, 1973-74, and 1976-77 editions of the FRACHE/ACE or COPA/ACE book, as the case may be (5). These data were combined with the 1978 data to produce a longitudinal analysis for this one region of the country.

Limitations of the Study

The data base created for this study, although extremely useful for the general purposes noted earlier, does have certain limitations. The data are only as reliable as the data supplied by institutions via the accrediting agencies for the COPA/ACE book (5). There are undoubtedly some erroneous agency listings and a small percentage of the institutional characteristics are probably incorrect, particularly some of the private/proprietary sponsorship designations. There are certainly some confusions about the exact accrediting agency listings for fields served by more than one agency, and those instances where the nature of the listing in the book is ambiguous. There were some obvious but uncorrectable inconsistencies in the way in which a few of the multiple campus institutions were listed. For the purpose of this study, these limitations were overcome by the size of the sample. The general relationships and trends explored could be delineated adequately enough with almost 2,500 institutions in the data base. The reader should be cautioned, however, against using as reliable the numbers of relationships by agency or region of the country, since sampling was employed and some inconsistencies in agency and institutional listings were recognized. However, the trends, ratios, proportions and other similar relationships can reasonably be assumed to be quite representative and reliable.

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The results of the study will be presented in the following order. First, for the sake of simplicity, the findings concerning those institutions which are not regionally accredited will be treated, because they are discrete findings, limited in scope, and can be understood without any significant reference to the other findings. Following this, the results of our analysis of the accreditation relationships of regionally accredited institutions will be presented, including a detailed analysis of the extent and distribution of relationships by region, by type of institution, and by type of specialized accrediting agency. Finally, the results of a longitudinal analysis of a set of institutions in one region will be presented in order to examine the rate and character of change in the profile of accrediting relationships through the 1970's.

Accrediting Relationships of Institutions That Are Not Regionally Accredited

As can be seen in Table 1, the six regions of the country differ markedly in the proportion of accredited institutions that are not regionally accredited. The range is from about 20 percent in the Western to about 40 percent in the Middle States region. The average is about 33 percent. The institutions comprising this group are predominantly non-degree granting, profit-seeking business and health professions training institutions which are

Table 1

Institution/Accrediting Agency Relationships of Institutions
That Are Not Regionally Accredited: Proportion and Distribution by Region

Region	Total Number of Accredited Institutions	Number not Regionally Accredited	Percentage of Total	Distribution of Institutions By Number (and Percentage) of Accrediting Agency Relationships		
				One Relationship	Two Relationships	Three Relationships
Middle States (MSA)	739	280	37.9	264 (94.3)	15 (5.4)	1 (0.4)
New England (NEA)	301	89	29.6	87 (97.8)	2 (2.2)	0 (0)
North Central (NCA) ⁽¹⁾	447	158	35.3	150 (94.9)	8 (5.1)	0 (0)
Northwest (NWA)	188	53	28.2	48 (90.6)	3 (5.7)	2 (3.8)
Southern (SACS) ^(1,2)	405	84	20.7	80 (95.2)	3 (3.6)	1 (1.2)
Western (WASC) ⁽²⁾	402	157	39.1	127 (80.9)	30 (19.1)	0 (0)
Total	2484	821	33.1	756 (92.1)	61 (7.4)	4 (0.5)

Notes: (1) Sample of states (NCA: 6 of 17; SACS: 4 of 11)

(2) SACS = Southern Commission on Colleges and Southern Occupational Education; WASC = Western Senior Commission and Western Junior Commission

accredited in their primary accrediting relationship by one of the four national institutional accrediting agencies (NATTS, AICS, AABC, and NHSC. See Table 2 and the Appendix). Several possible explanations exist for the differences in proportion of such institutions in the regions. If similar differences in proportions of any such institutions (not just accredited ones) exist by region, then the differences are obviously related to the differences in the nature of the regions--in the economies, in the state licensing and related requirements, and/or in the mix of non-profit career-related programs available where an ample market exists. If the differences are merely in the proportion of accredited institutions, then something about the nature of accrediting in that region would seem to be the primary reason -- a particularly liberal, conservative, or especially traditional postsecondary ethos, or an unusually forceful leader or set of leaders who have stimulated or retarded the development or recognition of such accrediting relationships. At this point, neither the facts about true proportions of such institutions by region nor the influences in the accrediting world which affect such institutions are clearly known. However, one of the primary influences would seem to be the relationship to large, densely populated areas with the need for a technically trained workforce.

Table 1 also contains the evidence to support the major findings about the accrediting relationships for institutions

which are not regionally accredited. Simply stated, these institutions have very few accrediting relationships. Some 92 percent of the sample examined in this study had only one relationship; only about 7 percent had two; very few (less than 1 percent) had three. None had more than three. Indeed, were it not for a group of specific two-agency relationships in California (NATTS-Medical Assistant), the proportion of one-agency institutions would exceed 95 percent. It would seem to be clear that the nature of these institutions -- small in size, homogeneous and usually singular in general program emphasis -- dictates that one agency is sufficient.

In Table 2, the distribution of agency relationships is presented for the institutions in question. Note that very few agencies are involved, that fully 81 percent involve the four national institutional accrediting agencies, and that 75 percent are accounted for by two agencies (NATTS and AICS) that dominate the accrediting activities for these institutions. Only a handful of other agencies are involved at all. Finally, and this is not presented in either Tables 1 or 2, 81 percent of the relatively few two-agency relationships found for these institutions involve the National Association of Trade and Technical Schools. It is not known whether the proportion of two-agency relationships is growing significantly and whether its existence is related to the nature of the institutions and/or to the nature or leadership of NATTS.

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Table 2

Distribution of Institution/Accrediting Agency Relationships
for Institutions That Are Not Regionally
Accredited, By Major Agencies and by Region

Region	Accrediting Agencies									TOTAL
	National Institutional ⁽³⁾				Specialized Programmatic					
	NATTS ⁽³⁾	AICS	AABC	NHSC	Theology	Allied Health	Law	Nursing	Other	
Middle States (MSA)	121	112	5	13	7	9	4	10	16	297
New England (NEA)	33	32	1	4	7	3	2	7	2	91
North Central (NCA) (1)	66	50	10	6	5	4	0	7	16	164
North-west (NWA)	24	26	2	0	2	3	0	0	3	60
Southern (SACS) (1,2)	16	51	3	2	4	8	1	1	3	89
Western (WASC)(2)	83	50	1	12	3	31	2	0	5	187
Total	343	321	22	37	28	58	9	25	45	888

Notes: (1) Sample of States (NCA: 6 of 17; SACS: 4 of 11)

(2) SACS = Southern Commission on Colleges and Southern Occupational Education; WASC = Western Senior Commission and Western Junior Commission

(3) See Appendix for abbreviations

Therefore, in relation to the primary focus of this study -- the existence and nature of multiple accreditation relationships -- the institutions that are not regionally accredited are not a significant factor. They have very few such relationships.

Accrediting Relationships of Regionally Accredited Institutions

The distribution of multiple accreditation relationships for regionally accredited institutions is very different from that which was described in the previous section for institutions not regionally accredited. The frequency of multiple accreditation relationships for regionally accredited institutions, although still limited to part of the population of institutions, is present to a much greater degree and the total number of relationships held by some institutions is much higher than is the case for the institutions not regionally accredited.

In Table 3 the overall distribution of relationships for the entire country and for each of the accrediting regions is presented. Two procedural considerations must be recalled in order to interpret properly the data presented in this and the following tables. First, the data for the North Central (NCA) and Southern (SACS) regions are sampled. Second, the coding of several of the accrediting areas or fields as a group (particularly the allied health area which has more than 20 subfields listed as

Table 3

Percentage Distribution of
Institution/Agency Relationships for
Regionally Accredited Institutions

Total Number of Relationships	R E G I O N S						TOTAL
	MSA	NEA	NCA (1)	NWA	SACS (1)	WASC	
1	30.3	39.6	31.1	36.3	53.0	40.8	38.1
2	30.5	32.5	29.8	21.5	19.6	30.6	27.8
3	14.8	13.2	16.3	13.3	11.8	11.8	13.7
4	10.5	3.3	9.3	11.9	4.0	4.9	7.4
5	4.8	3.3	2.1	3.0	3.7	2.9	3.5
6	2.0	1.4	2.1	0.7	1.9	0.4	1.6
7	1.1	1.4	1.7	3.7	0.6	0.8	1.3
8	1.5	0.5	1.0	---	0.9	1.2	1.0
9	0.9	1.4	1.0	2.2	0.6	1.2	1.1
10	0.4	---	0.7	0.7	---	0.8	0.4
11	0.4	0.5	0.3	1.5	0.6	0.4	0.5
12	0.4	---	0.7	1.5	0.6	1.6	0.7
13	0.2	0.9	---	---	0.9	0.4	0.4
14	---	0.5	0.7	1.5	0.3	---	0.4
15	---	0.5	0.7	0.7	---	0.8	0.4
16	0.4	0.5	---	---	---	0.4	0.2
17	0.7	---	0.7	---	0.6	0.4	0.5
18	0.7	---	1.0	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.5
19	0.4	0.5	---	---	---	---	0.2
20	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
21	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
22	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
23	---	---	0.7	---	0.3	---	0.2
24	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
25	---	---	---	0.7	---	---	0.1
Totals	100.0 (n=459)	100.0 (n=212)	100.0 (n=289)	100.0 (n=135)	100.0 (n=321)	100.0 (n=245)	100.0 (n=1663)

Note: (1) Sample of states (NCA: 6 states of 17; SACS: 4 states of 11)

"accredited programs" by the institutions) has yielded a range of accrediting relationships with a maximum between 19 and 25. Had the data been coded in more detail, the number of relationship figures would be higher with the maximum figures probably in the range of 22 to 28. The shape of the distribution probably would be generally the same.

Using the percentage figures we can safely describe the general relationships with the data in Table 3.

Several interesting points emerge, such as:

1. The distribution for the whole country and for each of the regions is skewed, with the bulk of the data bunched at the lower end of the distribution of number of relationships. The frequency tails off rapidly with the incidence of higher numbers of relationships being very low.
2. In the overall distribution, nearly 40 percent of the institutions have only one relationship, that with the regional accrediting agency.
3. Fully two-thirds of the institutions have two or fewer relationships. About 80 percent have three or fewer, with 41.5 percent having two or three relationships. Ninety percent of the institutions have five or fewer relationships, with about 50 percent having two to five relationships.
4. Although the distribution patterns for the six regions are similar, there are several important

differences in the distributions at the lower end of the relationships scale. First, note that there is a large range in the value for one relationship from 30.3 percent for MSA to 53.0 percent for SACS. When one examines these data along with the data by region for the "five and fewer relationships" situation, additional differences can be discerned. As can be seen in Table 4, three regions (New England, Southern, and Western) consistently have higher proportions in the "three or fewer" relationships; that is, in these regions, a greater proportion of institutions have fewer relationships. The percentages for "two or three" relationships -- that is, the group that have some but very few relationships is about the same across the regions with Northwest and Southern having less than the others. Five of the regions have about 50 to 60 percent of their institutions in the "two to five" relationships range, but again, the Southern region is significantly lower, at about 39 percent. Finally, all of the regions except Northwest and North Central have only 8 to 9 percent of their institutions with more than five relationships. NCA and NWA have 11.4 and 14.0 percent respectively.

Table 4

Various Groupings of the Percentage Distribution Data For
Institution/Agency Relationships for Regionally Accredited
Institutions.

GROUPINGS OF RELATIONSHIPS	REGIONS						TOTAL
	MSA	NEA	NCA	NWA	SACS	WASC	
2 or fewer	60.8	72.1	60.9	57.8	72.6	71.4	65.9
3 or fewer	75.6	85.3	77.2	71.1	84.4	83.2	79.6
2 to 3	45.3	45.7	46.1	34.8	31.4	42.4	41.5
5 or fewer	90.9	91.9	88.6	86.0	92.1	91.0	90.5
2 to 5	60.6	52.3	57.5	49.7	39.1	50.2	52.4
more than 5	8.9	8.9	11.4	14.0	7.9	9.0	9.5

It is difficult without further study to relate the foregoing data in a meaningful way to the perceived levels of institutional distress about duplication of effort, cost, and the other complaints about multiple accreditation relationships. What number of relationships brings what level of distress? Is the distress tolerable in general with fewer than three relationships? With fewer than five? How does this change with different accrediting agencies and with institutional characteristics? These questions are receiving study and will be better understood in the months ahead. What we can say at this point is that only about 10 percent of the regionally accredited postsecondary institutions in this country have more than five accrediting

relationships -- counting them as we have in this study. The next question then becomes, what are these institutions like? How does the distribution of relationships change with different institutional characteristics?

The Influence of Institutional
Sponsorship, Size, and Highest Degree Level

In Table 5, the influence of institutional sponsorship on the number of accrediting relationships is presented. The preponderance of institutions in the sample are either publicly supported or have private, non-profit status. The general characteristics of the distribution are the same for the public and for the private, non-profit institutions -- strongly skewed towards the lower end of the number of relationships distribution. However, there are several specific differences in the distributions. See the row percentages (middle figure) for total number of relationships equal to 2, 5, 9 to 12, 19, 23, and 25. Due to these differences the average number of relationships is slightly higher for the public institutions (see also Figure 9).

One can also discern that the percentage of institutions with two or fewer relationships is considerably higher for the private, non-profit institutions. The same circumstance holds for institutions with five or fewer relationships. Correspondingly, only 7.5 percent of the private non-profit institutions have more than five relationships. The

Table 5

Distribution of Institutional/Accrediting Agency Relationships for Regionally Accredited Institutions by Institutional Sponsorship^(1,2)

Institutional Sponsorship	TOTAL NUMBER OF RELATIONSHIPS																									Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
Public	318	193	131	74	41	11	10	10	15	6	7	11	3	4	3	3	6	5	---	---	---	---	3	---	1	855
	37.2	22.6	15.3	8.7	4.8	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.8	0.7	0.8	1.3	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.6	---	---	---	---	0.4	---	0.1	100.0
	50.2	41.8	57.5	60.2	70.7	42.3	45.6	58.8	83.3	85.7	77.8	91.7	42.9	66.7	50.0	75.0	75.0	55.6	---	---	---	---	100.0	---	100.0	51.4
Private Non-Profit	307	266	96	49	17	15	12	7	3	1	2	1	4	2	3	1	2	4	3	---	---	---	---	---	---	795
	38.6	33.5	12.1	6.2	2.1	1.9	1.5	0.9	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.4	---	---	---	---	---	---	100.0
	48.3	57.6	42.1	39.8	29.3	57.7	54.5	41.2	16.7	14.3	22.2	8.3	57.1	33.3	50.0	25.0	25.0	44.4	100.0	---	---	---	---	---	---	47.3
Profit-Seeking	9	3	1	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	13
	69.2	23.1	7.7	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	100.0
	1.4	0.6	0.4	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	0.8
All Institutions	634	462	228	123	58	26	22	17	18	7	9	12	7	6	6	4	8	9	3	---	---	---	3	---	1	1663
	38.1	27.8	13.7	7.4	3.5	1.6	1.3	1.0	1.1	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.2	---	---	---	0.2	---	0.1	100.0

Notes: (1) All regionally accredited institutions in MSA, NEA, NWA, and Western regions.
A sample of SACS (4 of 11), and NCA (6 of 17) states.

(2) The top figure is the number of institutions; the middle figure is the row percentage; the lowest figure is the column percentage.

figure for public institutions is 11.4 percent.

The higher average number of relationships for the public institutions may follow from two influences: 1) public institutions as a group are larger than private institutions; and 2) they generally have a programmatic makeup which is more highly related to the career, technical, and professional areas for which specialized accreditation is sought.

Table 6 shows the influence of institutional size on the distribution of accreditation agency relationships. The number of accrediting relationships that institutions have is strongly related to institutional size. Indeed, there is a strong, positive correlation between the number of relationships and institutional size. The Spearman non-parametric correlation coefficient (ρ) for this relationship is 0.57. The Kendall coefficient (τ) is 0.50. Each of these measurements has a significance of 0.001.

The influence of institutional size is most dramatically displayed by the percentages of institutions with only one relationship (it drops from 62.6 percent for very small institutions to 5.1 percent for very large ones), and by the percentages with more than five relationships. None of the categories of small institutions has more than five relationships, while 50.7 percent of the institutions with more than 10,000 students has more than five relationships. This corresponds to 2.5 percent of the 1,001-5,000 student size institutions and 17.1 percent of the 5,001-10,000 student size institutions. To put it another way,

Table 6
Distribution of Institutional/Accrediting Agency Relationships for Regionally
Accredited Institutions by Institutional Size (1,2)

Institutional Size	TOTAL NUMBER OF RELATIONSHIPS																									Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
1-1,000 students	347 62.6 54.8	175 31.6 37.9	23 4.2 10.1	7 1.3 5.7	2 0.4 3.4	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	554 100.0 33.3
1,001-5,000 students	244 35.9 38.5	214 31.5 46.3	129 19.0 56.6	54 8.0 43.9	20 2.9 34.5	11 1.6 42.3	5 0.7 22.7	1 0.1 5.9	1 0.1 5.6	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	679 100.0 40.8
5,001-10,000 students	33 14.1 5.2	50 21.5 10.8	54 23.2 23.7	33 14.2 26.8	23 9.9 39.7	7 3.0 26.9	6 2.6 27.3	5 2.1 29.4	7 3.0 38.9	1 0.4 14.3	3 1.3 33.3	3 1.3 25.0	3 1.3 42.9	1 0.4 16.7	3 1.3 56.0	-- -- --	-- -- --	1 0.4 11.1	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	233 100.0 14.0
more than 10,000 students	10 5.1 1.6	23 11.7 5.0	22 11.2 9.6	29 14.7 23.6	13 6.6 22.4	8 4.1 30.8	11 5.6 50.0	11 5.6 64.7	10 5.1 55.6	6 3.0 85.7	6 3.0 66.7	9 4.6 75.0	4 2.0 57.1	5 2.5 83.3	3 1.5 50.0	4 2.0 100.0	8 4.1 100.0	8 4.1 88.9	3 1.5 100.0	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	3 1.5 100.0	-- -- --	1 0.5 100.0	197 100.0 11.8
All Institutions	633 38.1	462 27.8	228 13.7	123 7.4	58 3.5	26 1.6	22 1.3	17 1.0	18 1.1	7 0.4	9 0.5	12 0.7	7 0.4	6 0.4	6 0.4	4 0.2	8 0.5	9 0.5	3 0.2	-- --	-- --	-- --	3 0.2	-- --	1 0.0	1663 100.0

Notes: (1) All regionally accredited institutions in MSA, NEA, NWA, and Western regions.
A sample of SACS (4 of 11), and NCA (6 of 17) states.

(2) The top figure is the number of institutions; the middle figure is the row percentage; the lowest figure is the column percentage.

89 percent of the institutions with more than five relationships have 5,000 or more students; 63 percent have over 10,000 students. So, the relationship of institutional size to the distribution of accrediting relationships is a very strong one.

Finally, Table 7 presents the influence on number of relationships at institutions represented in this study by the highest degree level. The same types of distribution and relationship are seen between these variables as was seen in the case of institutional size. The percentage of institutions with only one relationship drops directly in inverse relationship to the level of the highest degree offered, from 93 percent for non-degree institutions to 10.5 percent for those offering the doctorate. Neither the non-degree nor the associate degree categories have any institutions with more than five relationships (the highest level for non-degree institutions is three relationships). But the percentage with more than five relationships climbs sharply as degree levels advance. The baccalaureate institutions have 0.6 percent, the master's/professional level institutions have 9.6 percent and the doctorate category has 50.0 percent! Indeed, 98 percent of the institutions with more than five relationships offer at least the master's degree. Seventy-five percent offer the doctorate.

So, institutional size and the highest degree level seem to be very strongly related to the number of

Table 7

Distribution of Institutional/Accrediting Agency Relationships for Regionally Accredited Institutions by Highest Degree of The Institution (1,2)

TOTAL NUMBER OF RELATIONSHIPS																											
Highest Degree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	Total	
Non-degree	66 93.0 10.4	4 5.6 0.9	1 1.4 0.4	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	71 100.0 4.3	
Associate	276 48.2 43.6	166 29.0 35.9	82 14.3 36.0	37 6.5 30.1	12 2.1 20.7	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	573 100.0 34.5	
Baccalaureate	186 47.1 29.4	130 32.9 28.1	54 13.7 23.7	17 4.3 13.8	6 1.5 10.3	1 0.3 3.8	-- -- --	-- -- --	1 0.3 5.6	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	395 100.0 23.8	
Masters/Prof'l	81 21.0 12.8	122 31.6 26.4	63 16.3 27.6	59 15.3 48.0	24 6.2 41.4	12 3.1 46.2	10 2.6 45.5	2 0.5 11.8	5 1.3 27.8	1 0.3 14.3	1 0.3 11.1	4 1.0 33.3	1 0.3 14.3	-- -- --	-- -- --	1 0.3 25.0	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	386 100.0 23.2	
Doctorate	25 10.5 3.9	40 16.8 8.7	28 11.8 12.3	10 4.2 8.1	16 6.7 27.6	13 5.5 50.0	12 5.0 54.5	15 6.3 88.2	12 5.0 66.7	6 2.5 85.7	8 3.4 88.9	8 3.4 66.7	6 2.5 85.7	6 2.5 100.0	3 1.3 100.0	8 3.4 100.0	9 3.8 100.0	3 1.3 100.0	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	3 1.3 100.0	-- -- --	1 0.4 100.0	238 100.0 14.3	
All Institutions	634 38.1	462 27.8	228 13.7	123 7.4	58 3.5	26 1.6	22 1.3	17 1.0	18 1.1	7 0.4	9 0.5	12 0.7	7 0.4	6 0.4	6 0.4	4 0.2	8 0.5	9 0.5	3 0.2	-- -- --	-- -- --	-- -- --	3 0.2 --	-- -- --	1 0.1	1663 100.0	

Notes: (1) All regionally accredited institutions in MSA, NEA, NWA, and Western regions.
A sample of SACS (4 of 11), and NCA (6 of 17) states.

(2) The top figure is the number of institutions; the middle figure is the row percentage; the lowest figure is the column percentage.

accrediting relationships held by regionally accredited institutions. This is depicted clearly and usefully in Figure 1, which is a graphic representation of these relationships. When the size/accrediting relationships interaction is displayed by highest degree level of the institutions, fairly discrete positive relationships are discernible and the absolute values and slopes of the curves are such that the curves for each of the categories of institutions are sequential and progressive by degree category. This indicates that there is a strong relationship between institutional size and the number of accrediting relationships by degree level, and that the institutional types, as represented by highest degree level, are inherently different in general scope and type of program. This is then reflected in the size/number of accrediting relationships interaction.

The correlation coefficients for the relationships displayed in Figure 1 are as follows:

HIGHEST DEGREE LEVEL	KENDALL METHOD		SPEARMAN METHOD	
	Coefficient	Significance	Coefficient	Significance
Non-Degree	0.198	0.046	0.202	0.046
Associate	0.450	0.001	0.510	0.001
Baccalaureate	0.256	0.001	0.274	0.001
Masters/Prof'l	0.544	0.001	0.629	0.001
Doctorate	0.666	0.001	0.794	0.001
All Institutions	0.501	0.001	0.574	0.001

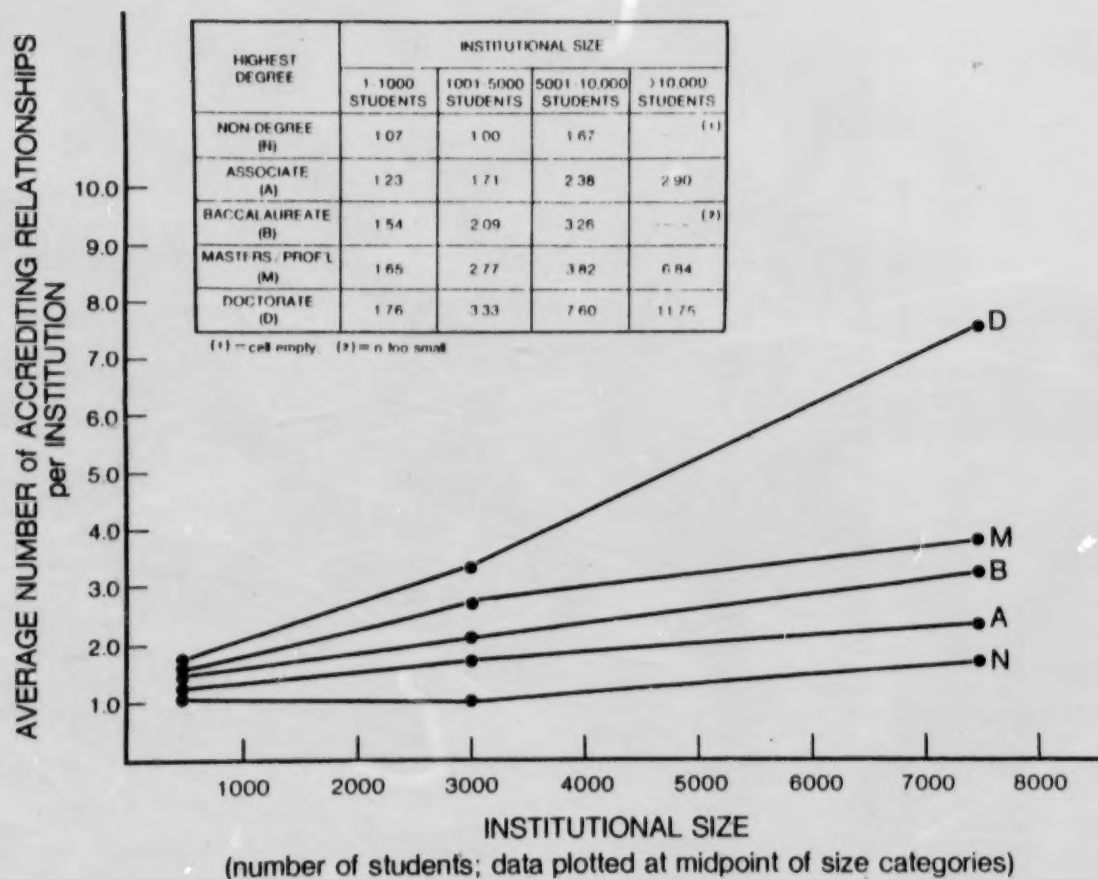


Figure 1

Relationship Between Average Number of Accrediting Relationships Per Institution and Institutional Size, by Highest Degree of the Institution

There is no reason to believe that the relationships described by the data presented in Tables 4 to 7 and Figure 1 would vary to any significant degree in any of the regions of the country. Such an analysis was conducted for the MSA region. With the exception that non-degree postsecondary granting institutions are regionally accredited in the MSA region (such institutions are regionally accredited by fewer than one-half of the regional commissions), where the number of institutions in a size category was adequate to observe reliably, the general relationships described above held exactly for each of the degree levels.

By-Region Analysis of the Influence of Institutional Characteristics

In order to simplify the analysis of the influence of institutional characteristics on the distribution of accrediting relationships by region, two descriptive statistical procedures were used. The average number of accrediting agency relationships was computed for the institutions in each region and for the whole sample, and the range of accrediting relationships was noted. Where the range was not a relatively continuous body of data, it was described further by indicating the discontinuities.

Tables 8 to 10 contain the data concerning the influence of institutional characteristics on the distributions by region. The patterns described for the nation hold up almost exactly in every region. Specifically, they are:

Table 8

Average Number and Range of Accrediting Agency Relationships
for Regionally Accredited Institutions
As a Function of Institutional Sponsorship By Region

Type of Sponsorship	R E G I O N S						Total (n=1663)
	MSA (n=459)	NEA (n=212)	NCA(1) (n=289)	NWA (n=135)	SACS(1) (n=321)	WASC(1) (n=245)	
Public	3.17 ⁽²⁾ (1-6, 8-13, 16, 17) ⁽³⁾	2.88 (1-6, 9, 13, 14, 16)	3.79 (1-12, 14, 17, 18, 23)	3.67 (1-5, 7, 9-12, 14, 15, 18, 25)	2.58 (1-13, 17, 18, 23)	2.46 (1-5, 7-13, 15-17)	3.15 (1-25)
Private, Non-Profit	2.90 (1-13, 16-19)	2.37 (1-8, 11, 13, 15, 19)	2.54 (1-7, 9, 15, 17)	2.72 (1-7, 14)	2.19 (1-7, 13, 14)	2.11 (1-6, 8-10, 18)	2.53 (1-19)
Profit- Seeking	1.40 (1-2)	----	1.75 (1-3)	----	----	1.00 (1)	1.38 (0-3)
Total	2.96 (1-13, 16-19)	2.57 (1-9, 11, 13-16, 19)	3.15 (1-12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 23)	3.44 (1-7, 9-12, 14, 15, 18, 25)	2.46 (1-9, 11-14, 17, 18, 23)	2.64 (1-13, 15-18)	2.84 (1-19, 23, 25)

Notes: (1) NCA: 6 states of 17; SACS: 4 states of 11; SACS = SCC and SOE; WASC = Wsr. and WJr.

(2) Average number of accrediting agency relationships.

(3) Range of accrediting agency relationships. Where the range is not composed of a continuous set of data, and actual sub-range data are shown.

Table 9

Average Number and Range of Accrediting Agency Relationships
for Regionally Accredited Institutions
As a Function of Institutional Size By Region

Size	R E G I O N S						Total (n=1663)
	MSA (n=459)	NEA (n=212)	NCA(1) (n=289)	NWA (n=135)	SACS(1) (n=321)	WASC(1) (n=245)	
1-1,000 students	1.65 ⁽²⁾ (1-5) ⁽³⁾	1.36 (1-4)	1.63 (1-4)	1.31 (1-3)	1.22 (1-3)	1.43 (1-3)	1.45 (1-5)
1,001-5,000 students	2.20 (1-6,9)	2.04 (1-5,7)	2.49 (1-7)	2.53 (1-7)	2.13 (1-7)	1.60 (1-3,5-8)	2.20 (1-8)
5,001-10,000 students	3.77 (1-9,13,18)	4.04 (1-8,15)	4.93 (1-9,12,15)	4.49 (1-12)	5.34 (1-7,9,11, 13,14)	2.51 (1-6,8,9)	3.97 (1-18)
more than 10,000 students	7.44 (1-12,16-19)	9.33 (1-14,16,19)	10.54 (3-14,17, 18,23)	10.17 (2-4,7,9, 14,15,18,25)	9.94 (1-5,8,11- 13,17,18,23)	5.10 (1-5,7-13, 15-18)	7.62 (1-25)
Total	2.96 (1-13,16-19)	2.57 (1-9,11,13-16,19)	3.15 (1-12,14,15, 17,18,23)	3.44 (1-7,9-12, 14,15,18,25)	2.46 (1-9,11-14, 17,18,23)	2.64 (1-13,15-18)	2.84 (1-19,23,25)

Notes: (1) NCA: 6 states of 17; SACS: 4 states of 11; SACS = SCC and SOE; WASC = WSc. and WJr.

(2) Average number of accrediting agency relationships.

(3) Range of accrediting agency relationships. Where the range is not composed of a continuous set of data, the actual sub-range data are shown.

Table 10

Average Number and Range of Accrediting Agency Relationships
for Regionally Accredited Institutions
As a Function of the Highest Degree of the Institution By Region

Highest Degree	R E G I O N S						Total (n=1663)
	MSA (n=459)	NEA (n=212)	NCA ⁽¹⁾ (n=289)	NWA (n=135)	SACS ⁽¹⁾ (n=321)	WASC ⁽¹⁾ (n=245)	
Non-Degree	---- ----	1.0 ⁽²⁾ (1) ⁽³⁾	1.50 (1-2)	---- ----	1.07 (1-3)	1.0 (1)	1.08 (1-3)
Associate	2.10 (1-5)	1.82 (1-5)	1.81 (1-5)	1.91 (1-4)	1.32 (1-5)	1.76 (1-5)	1.85 (1-5)
Baccalaureate	1.74 (1-5)	1.48 (1-4)	2.09 (1-5)	2.17 (1-3, 5, 9)	1.91 (1-6)	2.05 (1-3)	1.83 (1-6, 9)
Masters/Prof'l	2.85 (1-6, 9)	2.15 (1-6, 8)	3.30 (1-7)	3.61 (1-7, 10)	4.28 (1-9, 12)	3.23 (1-5, 7, 9, 11-13, 16)	3.03 (1-13, 16)
Doctorate	6.15 (1-13, 16-19)	6.78 (2, 7, 9, 11, 13-16, 19)	8.55 (1-12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 23)	11.57 (1, 4, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18, 25)	8.88 (1-9, 11-14, 17, 18, 23)	5.03 (1-6, 8-10, 12, 15, 17, 18)	7.11 (1-19, 23, 25)
Total	2.96 (1-13, 16-19)	2.57 (1-9, 11, 13-16, 19)	3.15 (1-12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 23)	3.44 (1-7, 9-12, 14, 15, 18, 25)	2.46 (1-9, 11-14, 17, 18, 23)	2.64 (1-13, 15, 18)	2.84 (1-19, 23, 25)

Notes: (1) NCA: 6 states of 17; SACS: 4 states of 11; SACS = SCC and SOI; WASC = WSR. and WJR.

(2) Average number of accrediting agency relationships.

(3) Range of accrediting agency relationships. Where the range is not composed of a continuous set of data, the actual sub-range data are shown.

the larger average number of relationships for public institutions; the almost linear influence of institutional size; the sequential, progressive relationship with highest degree of the institution (only the MSA and the NEA regions show a break in the progression at the baccalaureate level); and the presence of generally lower averages for three of the regions (NEA, SACS, and WASC) which show up in the overall averages by region, in the sponsorship distributions, and in half of the size category distributions. However, the three regions' pattern differences do not appear in the highest degree distributions.

The analysis by region by institutional characteristics discloses some additional specific regional differences which may help to explain some of the overall regional differences. Note the large differences by region in the average number of relationships at the doctoral and at the master's/professional institutions by region (Table 10) and also for the institutions with more than 5,000 students (Table 9). The large, higher-degree granting institutions in the WASC, MSA, and perhaps the NEA regions exhibit far fewer relationships than similar types of institutions in the other three regions. More study is needed to explain the differences in these groups of institutions by region.

Analysis of the Most Active Specialized Accrediting Agencies

The focus of the analysis shifts now to the agencies. The questions for which answers were sought concerned the

identity of the agencies which were most active in the relationships with institutions, and how much a list would change as one examines different types and sizes of institutions.

Those data are presented in Tables 11 and 12. The ten most active agencies (or field/agency areas) include two from the arts and sciences (chemistry and music), three from the health sciences (nursing, allied health, and dentistry), and five from the general professional areas, both graduate and undergraduate, (teacher education, engineering, social work, business, and law). These ten agencies account for about 2,300 accrediting relationships in the sample of 1,663 regionally accredited institutions. If the average institution has 2.84 relationships, (see Tables 8-10), one of which is the regional agency, then the average regionally accredited institution has 1.84 specialized accrediting agency relationships. Therefore, these ten agencies account for about 75 percent of all the specialized agency accrediting relationships for regionally accredited institutions.

With minor exceptions, the same ten agencies dominate the rank order listings across all institutional types, except the two lowest degree levels where only a few agencies operate.

The same dominance is reflected in the rank order presentation of two-agency and three-agency clusters in the accrediting relationships (see Table 13). That is, when one looks for patterns in the way agencies interact with

Table 11

Rank Order Listing of Specialized Accreditation Agencies Most Involved With
Regionally Accredited Institutions By Institutional Size and Highest Degree, 1978

Rank Order	For All Institutions (n/%) ⁽¹⁾	Institutional Size (students)			
		1-1,000 (n/%)	1,001-5,000 (n/%)	5,001-10,000 (n/%)	more than 10,000 (n/%)
1.	Chemistry (358/21.5)	Theology (55/9.9)	Chemistry (144/21.2)	Nursing (90/38.6)	Chemistry (115/58.4)
2.	Nursing (352/21.2)	Music (44/7.9)	Nursing (127/18.7)	Chemistry (83/35.6)	Nursing (110/55.8)
3.	Teacher Educ. (288/17.3)	Nursing (24/4.3)	Teacher Ed. (99/14.6)	Teacher Ed. (72/30.9)	Teacher Ed. (94/47.7)
4.	Allied Health (254/15.2)	Teacher Ed. (23/4.2)	Music (84/12.4)	Allied Health (66/28.3)	Allied Health (92/46.7)
5.	Music (252/15.2)	Chemistry (16/2.9)	Allied Health (83/12.2)	Dentistry (55/23.6)	Engineering (92/46.7)
6.	Engineering (213/12.8)	Social Wk. (15/2.7)	Dentistry (60/8.8)	Music (51/21.9)	Business (79/40.1)
7.	Dentistry (197/11.9)	Allied Health (13/2.3)	Engineering (57/8.4)	Social Wk. (35/15.0)	Dentistry (73/37.1)
8.	Social Work (156/9.4)	Art (10/1.8)	Social Wk. (40/5.9)	Business (31/13.3)	Music (73/37.1)
9.	Business (124/7.5)	Dentistry (9/1.6)	Law (17/2.5)	Law (28/12.0)	Social Wk. (66/33.5)
10.	Law (93/5.6)	Optometry (3/0.5)	Business (14/2.1)	Dietetics (15/6.4)	Psychology (55/27.9)
All Institutions (1663)		(554)	(679)	(233)	(197)

Rank Order	HIGHEST DEGREE OFFERED BY THE INSTITUTION				
	Non-Degree (n/%)	Associate (n/%)	Baccalaureate (n/%)	Masters/Prof'l. (n/%)	Doctorate (n/%)
1.	Allied Health (3/4.2)	Allied Health (146/25.5)	Chemistry (68/17.2)	Teacher Ed. (138/35.8)	Chemistry (157/66.0)
2.	Dentistry (3/4.2)	Nursing (143/24.9)	Music (60/15.2)	Chemistry (131/33.9)	Engineering (113/47.5)
3.		Dentistry (131/22.9)	Teacher Ed. (50/12.7)	Music (104/26.9)	Teacher Ed. (98/41.2)
4.		Engineering (38/6.6)	Nursing (48/12.2)	Nursing (74/19.2)	Business (96/40.3)
5.		Music (8/1.4)	Social Wk. (27/6.8)	Social Wk. (56/14.5)	Nursing (87/36.6)
6.			Allied Health (18/4.5)	Engineering (44/11.4)	Music (80/33.6)
7.			Engineering (18/4.5)	Theology (33/8.6)	Psychology (73/30.7)
8.			Art (8/2.0)	Business (26/6.7)	Social Wk. (73/30.7)
9.			Dentistry (8/2.0)	Art (24/6.2)	Allied Health (64/26.9)
10.				Allied Health (23/6.0)	Medicine (62/26.1)
All Institutions . . (71)		(573)	(395)	(386)	(238)

Note: (1) Number of institutions of the category accredited by the agency/percent of institutions in the category accredited by the agency.

Table 12

Rank Order Listing of Specialized Accreditation Agencies Most Involved With
Regionally Accredited Institutions by Sponsorship of Institution and Region, 1978

Rank Order	All Institutions		SPONSORSHIP OF INSTITUTION				REGION			
	(n/Z)	(1)	Public	(n/Z)	Private	(n/Z)	Profit-Seeking	(n/Z)	MSA	(n/Z)
1	Chemistry	(358/21.5)	Nursing	(246/28.8)	Chemistry	(202/25.4)	Dentistry	(2/15.4)	Chemistry	(135/29.4)
2	Nursing	(352/21.2)	Allied Health	(196/22.9)	Music	(133/16.7)	Nursing	(1/ 7.7)	Nursing	(121/26.4)
3	Teacher Ed.	(288/17.3)	Teacher Ed.	(186/21.8)	Nursing	(104/13.1)			Teacher Ed.	(71/15.5)
4	Allied Health	(254/15.2)	Dentistry	(167/19.5)	Teacher Ed.	(102/12.8)			Engineering	(68/14.8)
5	Music	(252/15.2)	Chemistry	(156/18.3)	Engineering	(80/10.1)			Allied Health	(68/14.8)
6	Engineering	(213/12.8)	Engineering	(133/15.6)	Social Work	(73/ 9.2)			Social Work	(53/11.6)
7	Dentistry	(197/11.9)	Music	(119/13.9)	Theology	(68/ 8.6)			Music	(52/11.3)
8	Social Work	(156/ 9.4)	Social Work	(83/ 9.7)	Allied Health	(58/ 7.3)			Dentistry	(43/ 9.4)
9	Business	(127/ 7.5)	Business	(74/ 8.7)	Law	(57/ 7.2)			Business	(30/ 6.5)
10	Law	(93/ 5.6)	Psychology	(44/ 5.2)	Business	(50/ 6.3)			Law	(26/ 5.7)
	Total	(1663)		(855)		(795)		(13)		(459)

Rank Order	REGION OF THE COUNTRY									
	NEA	(n/%)	NCA (2)	(n/%)	NWA	(n/%)	SACS (2)	(n/%)	WASC	(n/%)
1	Chemistry	(47/22.2)	Music	(79/27.3)	Teacher Ed.	(38/28.1)	Nursing	(55/17.1)	Allied Health	(49/20.0)
2	Nursing	(42/19.8)	Teacher Ed.	(78/27.0)	Nursing	(35/25.9)	Music	(51/15.9)	Nursing	(44/18.0)
3	Teacher Ed.	(34/16.0)	Chemistry	(67/23.2)	Allied Health	(29/21.5)	Teacher Ed.	(51/15.9)	Chemistry	(40/16.3)
4	Engineering	(30/14.2)	Nursing	(54/18.7)	Chemistry	(26/19.3)	Chemistry	(43/13.4)	Dentistry	(39/15.9)
5	Allied Health	(23/10.8)	Allied Health	(45/15.6)	Music	(26/19.3)	Allied Health	(40/12.5)	Engineering	(33/13.5)
6	Dentistry	(21/ 9.9)	Dentistry	(40/13.8)	Dentistry	(25/18.5)	Dentistry	(28/ 8.7)	Music	(27/11.0)
7	Music	(17/ 8.0)	Engineering	(37/12.8)	Engineering	(20/14.8)	Engineering	(25/ 7.8)	Business	(19/ 7.8)
8	Social Work	(16/ 7.5)	Social Work	(32/11.1)	Social Work	(16/11.9)	Social Work	(24/ 7.5)	Teacher Ed.	(16/ 6.5)
9	Business	(12/ 5.7)	Business	(26/ 9.0)	Law	(10/ 7.4)	Business	(22/ 6.9)	Social Work	(15/ 6.1)
10	Law/Psych.	(10/ 4.7)	Law/Theology	(19/ 6.6)	Psych./Speech	(8/ 5.9)	Law	(16/ 5.0)	Art	(14/ 5.7)
	Total	(212)		(289)		(135)		(321)		(245)

Notes: (1) n = number of institutions with a relationship to that specialized accrediting agency;
Z = percentage of all institutions in that category accredited by the agency.

(2) Sampled (NCA: 6 states of 17; SACS: 4 states of 11)

Table 13

Two-Agency and Three-Agency Clusters in Accrediting Relationships

Rank Order List of Two-Agency Clusters of Specialized Agencies Most Involved With Regionally Accredited Institutions, 1978		n
1	Chemistry - Teacher Education	165
2	Music - Teacher Education	149
3	Chemistry - Engineering	141
4	Chemistry - Music	140
5	Allied Health - Nursing	131
6	Chemistry - Nursing	122
7	Allied Health - Dentistry	116
8	Business - Chemistry	115
9	Nursing - Teacher Education	114
10	Dentistry - Nursing	103
Rank Order List of Three-Agency Clusters of Specialized Agencies Most Involved With Regionally Accredited Institutions, 1978		
1	Chemistry - Music - Teacher Education	101
2	Business - Chemistry - Teacher Education	88
3	Chemistry - Engineering - Teacher Education	82
4	Business - Chemistry - Engineering	81
5	Chemistry - Nursing - Teacher Education	79
6	Allied Health - Dentistry - Nursing	71
7	Music - Nursing - Teacher Education	70
8	Business - Chemistry - Nursing	69
9	Chemistry - Engineering - Music	68
10	Chemistry - Engineering - Nursing	68

the same institutions (which ones are found together in relationships with institutions), then the same pattern of agencies is found. Only two of the top ten (social work and law) are not found in the cluster rank order listings.

Therefore, the distribution of accrediting agency relationships for regionally accredited institutions is also a skewed one. Just as the group of institutions which have more than five agency relationships is dominated by larger and higher-degree granting institutions, there is a group of agencies which dominate the profile of accrediting relationships.

Longitudinal Analysis in One Region

In order to examine the changes, if any, that have occurred in the nature and extent of accreditation relationships during the 1970's, the data for one region (MSA) were examined longitudinally. The same general procedure that was employed for the 1978 data for the whole country and each region was applied to the 1970-71, 1973-74, and 1976-77 data for MSA. We felt comfortable about focusing on one region for the longitudinal analyses because the previous data had indicated that the same general distribution of relationships was present in each region and the influences of size and highest degree seemed to apply similarly across the regions. However, the regional differences with respect to average number of relationships and

the patterns for larger and higher degree institutions must be kept in mind as the results of this longitudinal analysis are considered beyond the region being examined.

As documented elsewhere, the number of regionally accredited postsecondary institutions continued to grow in the 1970's. In the MSA region, the number of regionally accredited institutions increased from 356 to 459 from 1970 to 1978, an increase of approximately 29 percent. Most of this growth can be attributed to the development of two-year, associate degree institutions and increases in the doctoral level category (see Table 17).

Changes in the institutional makeup of the region reflected the dynamic patterns of institutional life in the 1970's -- growth in the institutional size, albeit greatly slowed after the middle of the decade; some changes in the highest degree status at all levels as institutions changed to meet new needs or to survive; some institutional deaths or mergers; a still emerging, although greatly diminished, population of new and/or newly accredited private, often special purpose institutions; and the last wave of community colleges. So, understanding the changes in accrediting relationships is difficult at best.

As can be seen in Table 14, the average number of accrediting relationships for MSA accredited institutions increased from 2.49 to 2.96 from 1970 to 1978, an increase of about 19 percent. The changes within the distribution seemed to occur primarily in the later years, where the

Table 14
Distribution of Accreditation Relationships For
Regionally Accredited Institutions in the MSA Region
During 1970, 1973, 1976, and 1978

	NUMBER OF ACCREDITATION RELATIONSHIPS PER INSTITUTION																			Total	Mean ⁽²⁾
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19		
n ⁽¹⁾ 1970	151	111	44	13	14	4	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	3	1	3	1	1	---	356	2.49
Row %	42.4	31.2	12.4	3.7	3.9	1.1	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.8	0.3	0.8	0.3	0.3	---		
n 1973	125	133	64	26	15	8	4	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	393	2.67
Row %	31.8	33.8	16.3	6.6	3.8	2.0	1.0	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3		
n 1976	162	124	74	30	18	6	6	5	3	2	---	2	---	---	2	3	1	1	2	441	2.68
Row %	36.7	28.1	16.8	6.8	4.1	1.4	1.4	1.1	0.7	0.5	---	0.5	---	---	0.5	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.5		
n 1978	139	140	68	48	22	9	5	7	4	2	2	2	1	---	---	2	3	3	2	459	2.96
Row %	30.3	30.5	14.8	10.5	4.8	2.0	1.1	1.5	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.2	---	---	0.4	0.7	0.7	0.2		

Notes: (1) Number of institutions

(2) Average number of accreditation relationships per institution

proportion of institutions with one and with 4 to 9 relationships seemed to change the most. The proportion having only the regional accrediting relationship dropped significantly, perhaps as new, small, career-oriented institutions (many with specialized accreditation) emerged in the region. The proportion in the 4 to 9 relationships range grew by as much as 200 percent.

Analysis by Institutional Characteristics

The major changes in the distribution in eight years seemed to be as follows:

First, public institutions which grew by 46 percent (as opposed to 18 percent for the private institutions) also grew in average number of relationships from 2.56 to 3.22, an increase of 26 percent (as contrasted with 17 percent for the private institutions, see Table 15).

Second, although growth in number of institutions in the 5,000-10,000 and more than 10,000 categories was dramatic, 50 percent and 79 percent respectively in the eight years, little or no growth occurred in these important categories of institutions with respect to average number of relationships. So the large institutions (as a group in time) did not add to the number of their relationships (See Table 16).

Third, the major changes by institutional type (highest degree level) centered about the associate degree and master's/professional degree institutions which increased

Table 15

Average Number of Accreditation Relationships per Institution (and Range) for Regionally Accredited Institutions in the MSA Region as a Function of Institutional Sponsorship During 1970, 1973, 1976, and 1978

		1970	1973	1976	1978
Public	(n) ⁽¹⁾	(122)	(145)	(184)	(178)
	$\bar{x}$ ⁽²⁾	2.56	2.98	2.59	3.22
	Range ⁽³⁾	1-6, 11-16	1-8, 13, 14, 16, 18	1-10, 16	1-6, 8-12, 16, 17
Private	(n)	(234)	(248)	(257)	(276)
	$\bar{x}$	2.45	2.63	2.75	2.86
	Range	1-10, 14, 16-18	1-12, 15-19	1-10, 12, 15-19	1-9, 11-13, 16-19
Profit-Seeking	(n)	---	---	---	(5)
	$\bar{x}$	---	---	---	1.40
	Range	---	---	---	1-2
Total	(n)	(356)	(393)	(441)	(459)
	$\bar{x}$	2.49	2.67	2.68	2.96
	Range	1-18	1-19	1-10, 12, 15-19	1-13, 16-19

Notes: (1) number of institutions
 (2) average number of accreditation relationships per institution
 (3) range of accreditation relationships per institution

Table 16

Average Number of Accreditation Relationships (and Range) for
Regionally Accredited Institutions in the MSA Region as a Function of
Institutional Size During 1970, 1973, 1976, and 1978

Size	1970	1973	1976	1978
(n/%) ⁽¹⁾	(112/31.5)	(109/27.7)	(120/27.2)	(132/26.8)
1-1,000 $\bar{x}$ ⁽²⁾	1.38	1.43	1.54	1.65
Range ⁽³⁾	1-5	1-3,5	1-4	1-5
(n/%)	(165/46.4)	(179/45.6)	(193/43.8)	(208/45.3)
1,000-5,000 $\bar{x}$	1.90	2.14	2.02	2.20
Range	1-6	1-6	1-7	1-6,9
(n/%)	(46/12.9)	(58/14.8)	(68/15.4)	(69/15.0)
5,001-10,000 $\bar{x}$	3.39	3.48	3.37	3.77
Range	1-11	1-6,8,9,11,12	1-9,12,15	1-9,13,18
(n/%)	(33/9.3)	(47/12.0)	(60/13.6)	(59/12.9)
more than 10,000 $\bar{x}$	7.97	7.28	6.32	7.44
Range	2-8,10,12-18	2-8,10,11,13-19	1-10,12,15-19	1-12,16-19
(n)	(356)	(393)	(441)	(459)
Total $\bar{x}$	2.49	2.67	2.68	2.96
Range	1-18	1-19	1-10,12,15-19	1-13,16-19

Notes: (1) number of institutions; column percentage

(2) average number of accreditation relationships per institution

(3) range of accreditation relationships per institution

in average number of accrediting relationships 49 percent and 30 percent, respectively. There was little or no change at the baccalaureate and doctoral levels (see Table 17).

It appears that among the institutions which have the highest number of accrediting relationships, nationally and by region (the more than 5,000 student and master's/professional and doctorate granting institutions) only the master's/professional institutions (as a group, examined on a non-cohort basis) had an appreciable increase in number of relationships.

Cohort Analysis for a Group of Large Universities

In order to ascertain if the patterns of change or lack of it as noted above for the institutions with a high number of relationships was confirmed for individual institutions over time (as opposed to patterns in a group in which the group membership changed), a cohort analysis was conducted. In the MSA region, 23 institutions were present in 1970 and 1978 and had more than five accrediting relationships. Nineteen were used in the cohort; confusing multicampus listings in the directory eliminated the four other institutions. All 19 were doctoral level institutions with size greater than 5,000 students and most were of private, non-profit sponsorship.

Between 1970 and 1978, 14 of the 19 institutions added at least one new accreditation relationship. The range of

Table 17

Average Number of Accreditation Relationships Per Institution (and Range)
For Regionally Accredited Institutions in the MSA Region as a Function of
Highest Institutional Degree During 1970, 1973, 1976, and 1978

Highest Degree of Institution	1970	1973	1976	1978
(n/%) ⁽¹⁾	----	----	----	----
Non-Degree $\bar{x}$ ⁽²⁾	----	----	----	----
Range ⁽³⁾	----	----	----	----
(n/%)	(76/21.3)	(102/26.0)	(117/26.5)	(121/26.4)
Associate $\bar{x}$	1.41	1.97	1.81	2.10
Range	1-4	1-5	1-5	1-5
(n/%)	(107/30.1)	(116/29.5)	(120/27.2)	(125/27.2)
Baccalaureate $\bar{x}$	1.69	1.61	1.66	1.74
Range	1-3	1-4	1-4	1-5
(n/%)	(111/31.2)	(110/28.0)	(125/28.3)	(128/27.9)
Masters/Prof'l. $\bar{x}$	2.20	2.53	2.61	2.85
Range	1-6	1-8	1-3, 8, 9	1-6, 9
(n/%)	(62/17.4)	(65/16.5)	(79/17.9)	(85/18.5)
Doctorate $\bar{x}$	6.10	6.43	5.63	6.15
Range	1-18	1-19	1-10, 12, 15-19	1-13, 16-19
(n)	(356)	(393)	(441)	(459)
Total $\bar{x}$	2.49	2.67	2.68	2.96
Range	1-18	1-19	1-10, 12, 15-19	1-13, 16-19

Notes: (1) number of institutions; column percentage

(2) average number of accreditation relationships per institution

(3) range of accreditation relationships per institution

changes in number of relationships was from -1 to +7, with the median change +2. There was no major difference between the public and private institutions in the group. It would seem that the cohort group of doctoral institutions in the MSA region between 1970 and 1978 exhibited an increase in specialized agency relationships of somewhere between 25 and 35 percent (adding two relationships to an average of six to seven; refer to Table 10), while the total group with its membership changing over this period, showed no increase (see Table 17).

Table 18 presents the data concerning the specific specialized accrediting agencies as they related to the cohort group of universities over the eight-year period. The familiar top ten agencies are noticeably present in the first column. In the third column (1970 No, 1978 Yes) can be seen those agencies which became actively involved in accrediting relationships with the cohort universities during the 1970's. Allied health, rehabilitation counseling, and dietetics led the way in this regard.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The following summary and conclusions seem justified from the data:

1. Institutions not regionally accredited do not exhibit any substantial multiple accreditation relationships. Very few of these generally small, career-oriented institutions are accredited by

Table 18

Number of Institutions in the Cohort Group of
19 MSA Doctoral Level Institutions Accredited
By Agency 1970-1978

AGENCY	1970 Yes; 1978 Yes	1970 Yes; 1978 No	1970 No; 1978 Yes	1970 No; 1978 No
Allied Health	8	0	5	6
Architecture	8	0	1	10
Art	4	0	1	14
Business	13	0	2	4
Chemistry	18	0	1	0
Chiropractic	0	0	0	19
Clinical Past.	0	0	0	19
Construction	0	0	0	19
Dentistry	9	0	0	10
Dietetics	0	0	4	15
Engineering	15	0	0	4
Forestry	1	0	0	18
Health Serv.	5	0	2	12
Home Econ.	0	0	1	18
Ind. Tech.	0	0	0	19
Int. Design	0	0	0	19
Journalism	4	0	2	13
Land. Arch.	2	0	2	15
Law	16	0	0	3
Librarianship	4	0	1	14
Medical Asst.	0	0	0	19
Medicine	11	0	2	6
Music	8	0	1	10
Nursing	15	0	1	3
Optometry	0	0	0	19
Osteopathy	0	0	0	19
Pharmacy	6	2	0	11
Physical Therapy	7	0	1	11
Podiatry	0	0	0	19
Psychology	10	0	3	6
Pub. Health	3	0	0	16
Rehab. Coun.	0	0	5	14
Social Work	10	0	2	7
Speech Path.	4	0	2	13
Teacher Ed.	12	0	2	5
Theology	1	0	0	18
Vet. Med.	1	0	0	18

more than one agency.

2. Regionally accredited institutions have a wide range of accrediting relationships and a greatly skewed pattern or distribution of such relationships. About 40 percent have no relationship other than that with the regional agency. Fully two-thirds have two relationships or fewer, and 90 percent have five or fewer -- by counting the agencies as indicated in this study.
3. The 10 percent of the regionally accredited institutions that have more than about five accrediting relationships are predominantly large (89 percent over 5,000 students in size, 63 percent over 10,000 students in size) and offer degrees on the upper end of the degree spectrum (98 percent at least the master's degree, 75 percent the doctorate).
4. There is a strong relationship between the number of accrediting relationships for regionally accredited institutions and the size of the institutions. This relationship holds in each type of institution as distinguished by highest degree offered. Relationships increase in a sequential way as one moves up through the highest degree categories. Thus, highest degree level is a factor which also influences the number of accrediting relationships that institutions hold (see Figure 1).

5. There are somewhat more accrediting relationships for public institutions than for private institutions.
6. The general patterns and characteristics described in points one through five above hold for each of the regions of the country.
7. There are some specific regional differences in the patterns of accrediting relationships. Three of the six regions (New England, Southern, and Western) seem to have generally fewer accrediting relationships per institution. These patterns do not hold for all institutional sizes and degree levels. The large, master's, and doctoral level institutions in some regions have far fewer relationships than do similar institutions in other regions.
8. Ten of the specialized accrediting agencies/areas (see Table 11) dominate the rank order distributions of agencies that accredit at regionally accredited institutions. These agencies, with few exceptions, are the most active regardless of institutional size and degree level. They account for about 75 percent of the accrediting relationships held by specialized agencies.
9. A longitudinal analysis in one region indicated a modest growth in accrediting relationships (about 20 percent) in the 1970-78 period. The growth occurred primarily on the lower end of the

number of relationships distribution. Public institution relationships grew somewhat more than did private institution relationships. Little growth in the number of relationships for larger institutions as a group over time occurred during the period. The number of relationships for the master's/professional category and for the associate degree category grew, while no growth occurred for the doctorate and baccalaureate institutions.

10. A cohort analysis of 19 large universities indicated that from 1970 to 1978 the median institution increased by +2 relationships. The range was from -1 to +7 relationships.

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS

For Further Study

It would seem that several areas are worthy of additional study and several new areas ought to be explored. First, it is clear that more work is needed to explain the differences that were found among the regions of the country in the number of accrediting relationships per institution and in the differences for the larger and highest degree level institutions. Second, it would be interesting to explore more fully the clusters of accrediting agencies by type (health-related, graduate professional, arts and science areas, etc.) as they relate to types of institutions.

Some new areas clearly need work. Of considerable importance is the relationship between level of impact on (or perceived distress at) the institution and the number of accrediting relationships, by type of institution. It also is important to learn more about the motivation to engage in multiple accreditation relationships. An interesting way of exploring the motivation question would be to examine those program areas at colleges and universities for which specialized accrediting agencies exist, but that have chosen not to seek such accreditation. Finally, we should learn as much about the evaluation team process and characteristics and the self-study processes for specialized and national institutional accrediting agencies as we know about regional institutional agencies (4,7,8).

For Further Agency Cooperation

The data presented in this report should be of value to those discussing the possibilities for increased inter-agency and institution/agency cooperation in order to reduce unnecessary duplication, cost, and the like for both institutions and agencies. It seems logical that some of the focus of discussion about common terms, data needs, and training efforts as well as joint or concurrent self-study and evaluation team efforts ought to focus on the ten most active agencies as identified in this study. Similarly, active discussions between the representatives of institutions by type of institution (for instance,

doctoral level public, land-grant, and private institutions, or state colleges and regional universities) and the agencies most active in accrediting those types of institutions can now proceed since the primary agency/institution relationships have been identified.

It is hoped that further research in this area will provide additional useful information about this important process unique to the United States postsecondary scene -- accreditation.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. For a review of the issues see "The Accreditors Are Coming! The Accreditors are Coming!" The Chronicle of Higher Education, May 22, 1978, pp. 7-8; Brodie, Donald C., and Heaney, Robert P., "Need for Reform in Health Professions Accrediting," Science, Vol. 201, August 18, 1978, pp. 589-593; and Kirkwood, Robert, "Institutional Responsibilities in Accreditation," Educational Record, Vol. 59, No. 4, Fall 1978, pp. 297-304.
2. The remarks of President William Knisely of the Medical University of South Carolina made before the meeting of the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation on January 31, 1979, in Charleston, S.C., are typical of those made by the leaders of institutions which are accredited by more than one agency. President Knisely sharply criticized the duplication of effort inherent in and the cost of self-study processes, reporting requirements, and evaluation team units from multiple accreditation relationships. Other outspoken presidents have been those from large, land-grant, and major private universities, virtually all of which have substantial numbers of accrediting relationships per institution.
3. The entire program of the Winter 1979 meeting (January 31-February 2, 1979, in Charleston, S.C.) of the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation was devoted to explaining the possibilities for and advancing the notion of increased cooperation among accrediting agencies. Representatives of about three-quarters of the COPA recognized agencies participated along with government, institutional, and lay observers. The conference produced several dozen suggestions and recommended steps for COPA, for agencies, and for institutions in order to produce more useful cooperation among the agencies as they work with institutions.
4. Kells, H.R., "The People of Accreditation: A Study of The Characteristics of Evaluation Teams and Related Aspects of the Accrediting Process," The Journal of Higher Education, Vol. 50, No. 2, March/April 1979, pp. 178-198.
5. Accredited Institutions of Postsecondary Education. Published for the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation by the American Council on Education, Washington, D.C., 1978-79. Also employed were the issues for 1970-71, 1975-76, and 1976-77, some of which were compiled for the Federation of Regional Accrediting Commissions of Higher Education (FRACHE).
6. The generally recognized accrediting regions of the country are unique to the accrediting process. To these writers' knowledge they do not coincide with region

boundaries employed by any other process or agency. They were developed by the regional associations during a 25-year period starting in the 1880's. The regions vary greatly in size, number, and density of postsecondary institutions (see Phillips, James M., "Regional Accrediting Criteria: A Study to Assess Their Relative Importance and Variability in the Evaluation of Colleges and Universities," Ph.D. dissertation, The Catholic University of America, 1979, Table 1,1, p. 6). To many observers, some of the regional boundaries make little sense, but although several attempts have been made to move to a more rational, manageable circumstance, little progress has been made in this regard. For exact definitions of the regions see the COPA/ACE Accredited Institutions (reference 5).

7. Kells, H.R. and Kirkwood, Robert, "Institutional Self-Evaluation Processes," Educational Record, Vol. 60, No. 1, Winter 1979, pp. 45-65.

8. Kells, H.R. and Kirkwood, Robert, "Analysis of a Major Body of Institutional Research Studies Conducted in the Northeast, 1972-1977." Paper presented at the meeting of the Northeast Association for Institutional Research, State College, Pa., October 12, 1978. (ERIC HE#010540).

APPENDIX

List of Accrediting Fields for which Agencies are Recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation with Coding Notations

Regional and National Institutional

1. American Association of Bible Colleges (AABC)
2. Association of Independent Colleges and Schools (AICS)
3. Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA)
4. National Association of Trade and Technical Schools
(NATTS)
5. National Home Study Council (NESC)
6. New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEA)
7. North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA)
8. Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges (NWA)
9. Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)
Commission on Colleges (SCC)
Commission on Occupational Education Institutions (COEI)
10. Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)
Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and
Universities (WSr.)
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior
Colleges (WJr.)

Specialized/Programmatic

11. Allied Health (AH)
[COPA recognizes the American Medical Association
(AMA) and its Committee on Allied Health Education
and Accreditation (CAHEA) as an umbrella agency
for accrediting 18 distinct educational programs
in the allied health areas]
12. Architecture (AC)
13. Art (AR)
14. Business (BU)

15. Chemistry (CH)
16. Chiropractice Education (CI)
17. Clinical Pastoral Education (CL)
18. Construction Education (CO)
19. Community and Public Health (PU)
20. Dentistry and Dental Auxiliary Programs (DE)
[Four programs are included in this category]
21. Dietetics (DI)
22. Engineering (EN)
[Four levels of engineering are included in this category]
23. Forestry (FO)
24. Health Services Administration (HA)
25. Home Economics (HE)
26. Industrial Technology (IN)
27. Interior Design (ID)
28. Journalism (JO)
29. Landscape Architecture (LN)
30. Law (LA)
[Two agencies are recognized. They cooperate in inspection of law schools]
31. Librarianship (LI)
32. Medical Assistant/Medical Laboratory/Technician (MA)
[The agency recognized in this field is independent from the AMA allied health umbrella]
33. Medicine (ME)
34. Music (MU)
35. Nursing (NU)
[Two agencies are recognized, one for four levels of nursing; the other for one level only]
36. Optometry (OP)

- 37. Osteopathic Medicine (OS)
- 38. Pharmacy (PH)
- 39. Physical Therapy (PY)
[Both the AMA agency and a separate agency are
recognized in this field; the latter accredits
programs at two levels]
- 40. Podiatry (PO)
- 41. Psychology (PS)
- 42. Rehabilitation Counseling Education (RE)
- 43. Social Work (SW)
- 44. Speech Pathology and Audiology (SP)
- 45. Teacher Education (TE)
- 46. Theology (TH)
- 47. Veterinary Medicine (VE)